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WITCH HUNTER ANGELA
PART THREE



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PART THREE
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WITCH HUNTER ANGELA



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DIRECT EDITION

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Secret Wars

The Multiverse was undone! Now all that remains is Battleworld, a massive, patchwork planet compos'd of the fragments of the worlds that have left this mortal plane, and maintained by its god and master, Victor Von Doom!

In one such fragment, Lord Doom's mightiest Witch Hunter, Angela, is on a quest to vanquish the vile evil of the Faustians—foul souls who have forg'd pacts of great power with the Enchantress of Faerie.

Thus, the Enchantress appear'd unto Angela pledging a vow of vengeance: that upon Angela's slaying of three Faustians, her dearest companion and fellow Witch Hunter, Serah, would be no more than ash and bone.

Unstirr'd by the wicked warning, Angela and Serah hath so far led two Faustians to Doom's final reckoning in death...and even now relentlessly pursue the third.



WITCH HUNTER ANGELA

Part Three, In Which Hearts Rend and Heads Roll

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Angela co-created by Todd McFarlane & Neil Gaiman

Castle Caldecote, Cumberland.

Oh, Angela, this is so promising.

I am certain this is the land of candied apples and kittens and we are not about to read "*Thunder. Enter the Three Witches*" at all.

Allusions, pet.

I know, I know, I *did* promise to cut back.

This is the castle where the Mother Abbess of Heven said the *third Faustian* might be found...

Serah, we can yet turn back. We have struck no bargain with them.

You need not make everything *so* dramatic, love. I intend our finale to be a *comedy*, not a tragedy.

And the missive you sent away with the Gardiner's Men, to Marlowe?

Never you fret, sweet. It would be sure to curl those lovely ribbons of yours and I *much* prefer them all wriggly.

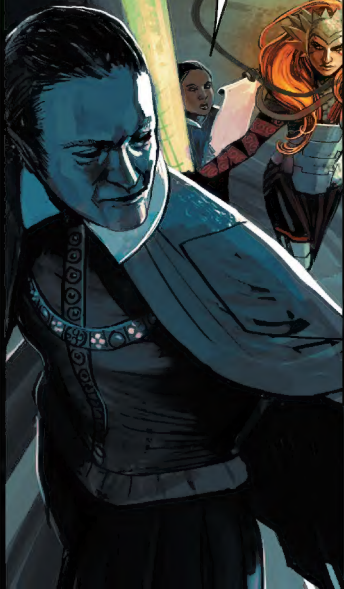
Thank you for coming, sisters.

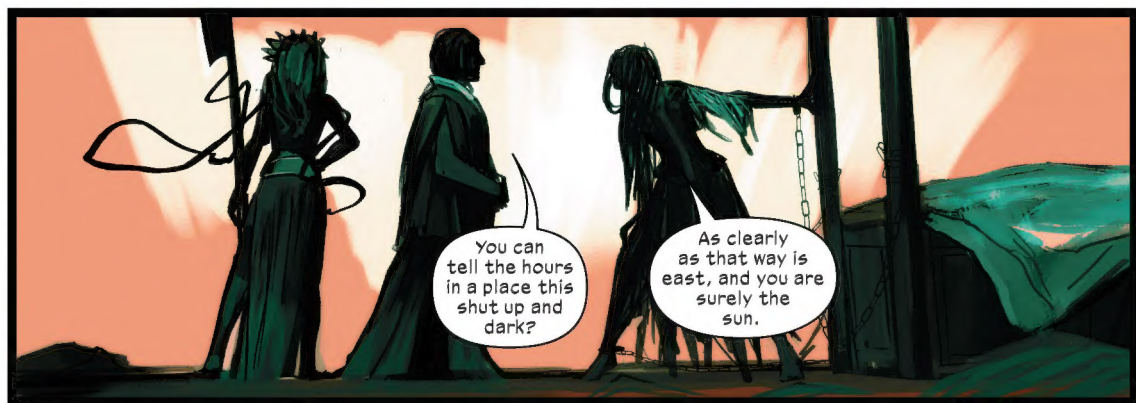
Our ward's name is *Anna Maria*--a wild girl, wayward, yet gold of heart--

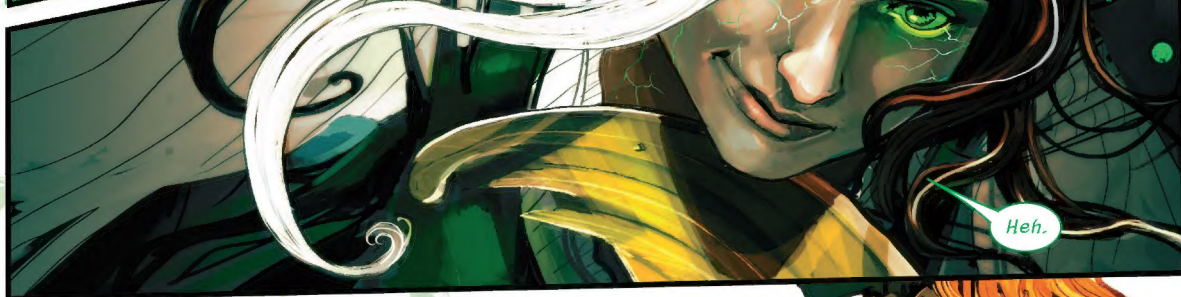
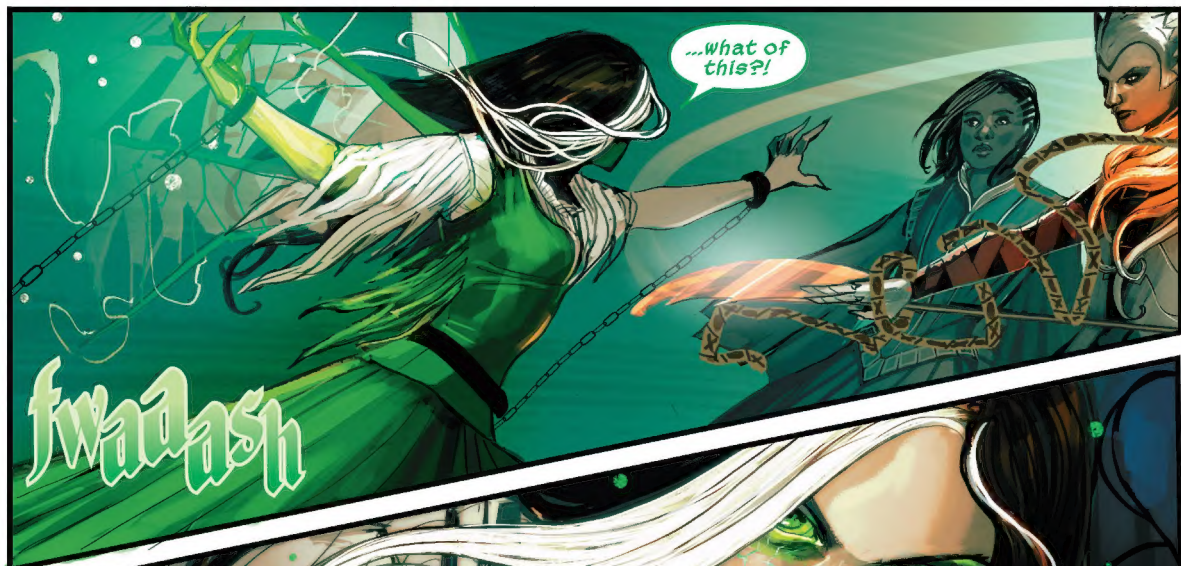
You say she is the natural daughter of a bishop, Master Coulson? Who has ordered that she never be touched?

Aye, m'lady. He pays for her keep and care. And she were secret and safe from the world, 'til she run off last new moon...

Now, our Anna Maria is--









Sister Angela
will keep young
Anna Maria
under guard...

She has a
fondness for
wayward things.

I have felt that
vital green magic
in the girl, Faerie-
bright...

Now I believe the
Enchantress sends
a *sliver of herself*
into each of those
with whom she deals.

As she rose from the
corpse of *Captain Buchanan*.
As she was in *Edwin Brocc*
and his *venomous* beasts.

She plants roots in
them to flower in their
deeds, and claims lands
with their lives.



There were no
Faustians until
Marlowe's play...

The tale is old, but
this resurgence new.
The *strength* of Faerie,
the *observance* of
its rites, the *spread*
of its believers...

If the story Marlowe
tells nests in the minds
of those who hear it...

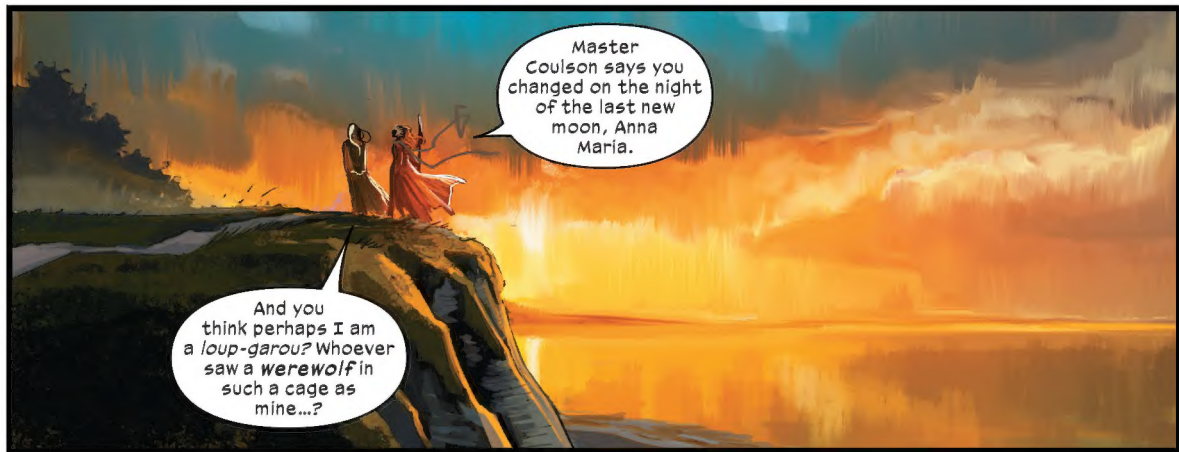
If it is *sheltered* by
faith, *watered* by tears,
fed with longing for a
Dealmaker to come and
bargain away their pain--

Fie,
she's using the
play.

The Enchantress is
using stories as magic,
tempting believers
to turn to her--

--to bring back
the Faerie ways.

We're going
to need a story, a
magic, of our own.



Master Coulson says you changed on the night of the last new moon, Anna Maria.

And you think perhaps I am a loup-garou? Whoever saw a werewolf in such a cage as mine...?



No. I know you are not mad. Lady Serah has sensed the magic within you...

The Enchantress. Who threatens Lady Serah's life.

You have killed no one, Anna Maria--harmed no one but yourself.

Tell me the truth, and I will make you this deal. Tell me the truth, and I will find a way to free you.



"Very well. I was born...

"...Witchbreed."

"My touch, as I would learn...

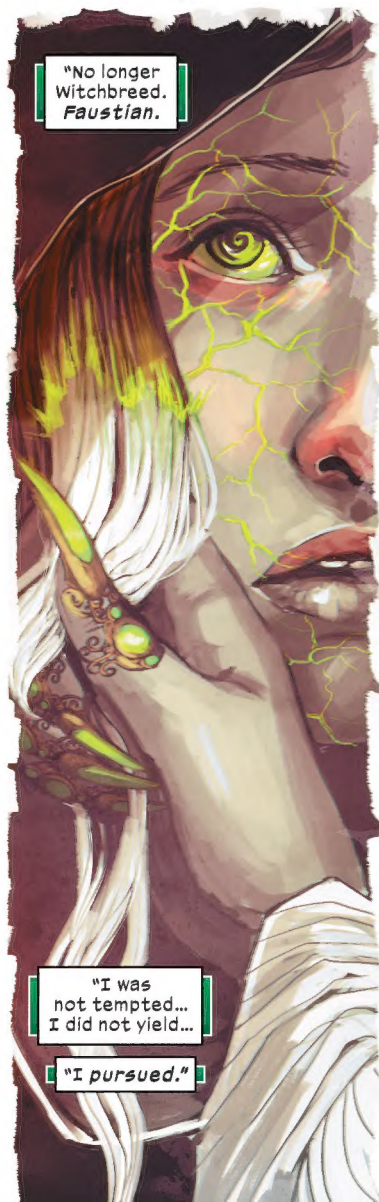


"...was death."

"When the path to Faerie opened, I went. Willingly."

"There was a rhododendron tree, and a woman with voice like wine, who smelled of wild horses and honeysuckle and the hunt..."

"I asked her to make me other than what I was."



"No longer Witchbreed. Faustian."

"I was not tempted... I did not yield..."

"I pursued."



Later.

We've been here for two weeks, my love. The child has barely lost control, even once.

Perhaps if Anna Maria were brought to the Abbey, before the Holy Mother...

You want to adopt her.

I do *not* want to adopt her.



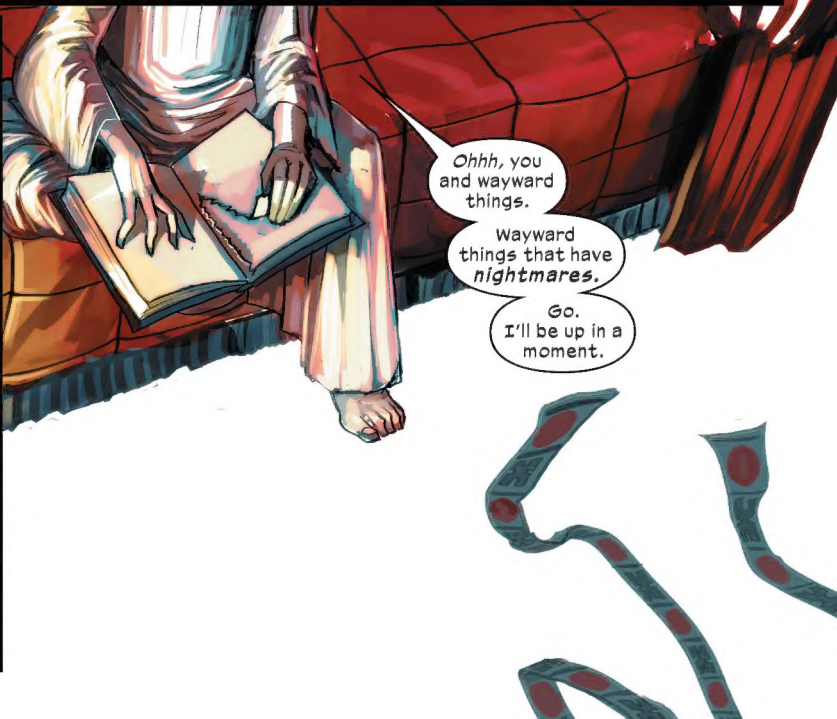
As you will. *I want to adopt her.*

We *cannot* adopt her.

Also, stop making deliberate incongruities. This *is* a period piece, you know.



clank
clink
She wakes. Perhaps a nightmare--?



Ohhh, you and wayward things.

Wayward things that have *nightmares*.

Go. I'll be up in a moment.



Child--

I'm sorry,
I--she's in my
head, she's in
my head--



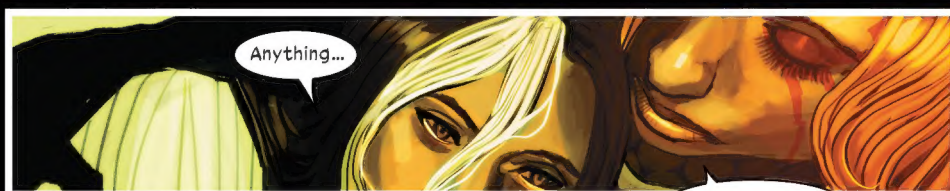
Sh-sh-sh...

Please--tell
me a story, Sister
Angela. A song, a tale,
anything--drown
her out!



I am
not...Serah,
she is--

Please.
Anything.



Anything...

I am not
a storyteller. But
I love hearing stories.
I love *seeing*
stories.

And I have
been lucky to see
some of the great
tellings of the
great stories...

"Though I did not know the full truth at the time..."

Kill me to-morrow: let me live to-night!

Nay, if you strive--

But half an hour!

Being done, there is no pause.

But while I say one prayer!

It is too late.

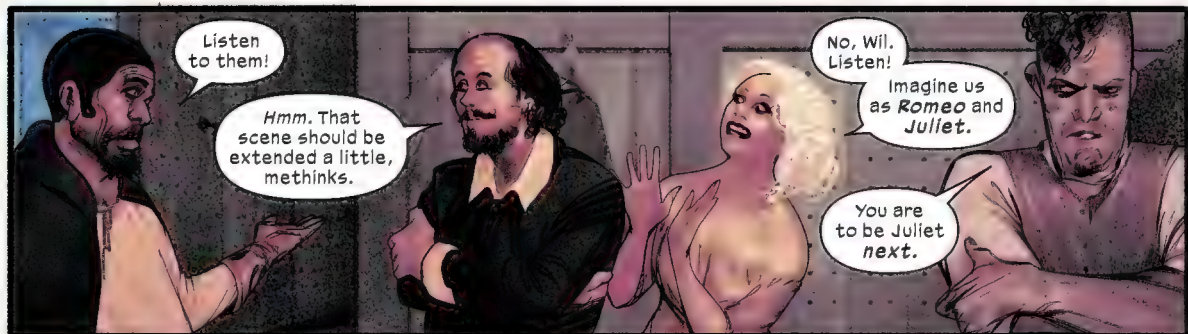
"Johnson and Bowen were the finest actors I'd ever seen at the Globe.

"Whenever we were in London, Serah and I would see them...

"They made their stories unforgettable.

"But they wanted more..."

"Listen, Will!"



"...it shall be so."

The dashing
rocks thy sea-sick
weary bark!

Here's to
my love!



O true
apothecary!
Thy drugs
are quick. Thus
with a--



Akk...
no. It...



Johnson!

"Serah studied the
brew afterwards. Fenny
Snake, Blind-Worm's
Sting and much more.

"It should
have killed.



"It *should* have.



"I did not know
what rose up from
the stage..."

"...but he was a foe and a
threat. I reached for my
blades, knowing I had Witch
Hunter work to do..."

"...but one was
both swifter and
closer than I."

A shadow,
strutting the
hour upon the
stage...

Come!
It wasn't
meant to be
like this!



"And the story must go on."

O happy dagger!

This is thy sheath.

"I cannot truly say what happened. Marshall died. They fled.

"We pored over the evidence. They were not Witchbreed. They were not Faustians, though perhaps were akin to them. They were something else...

"Serah thought that in the end, they stayed true to their story, and it sustained them.

"But what we knew for sure?

"It delighted *us*.

"(Though Will said it was 'most off the script.')



The tale
meant enough to
them to change who
they were...

Didst thou
think *thy* magic
fiercer than
mine?!



No! I am
mortal, I am
me, I--

I can
yet save
us!



But
not all change
happily, it would
seem.

Didst thou
think *thy* **story**
would tempt her
away?

Angela!



Sister
Angela, from the
Enchantress--!
Lady
Serah, from your
curse--!
And my
own soul...



...from this prison.

No!



Not yet, child--*not* yet--!



...?

She lives, Angela! *She lives!* She undid the deal--

The *Faustian* dies, but the girl beneath, the *Witchbreed*...



...lives?



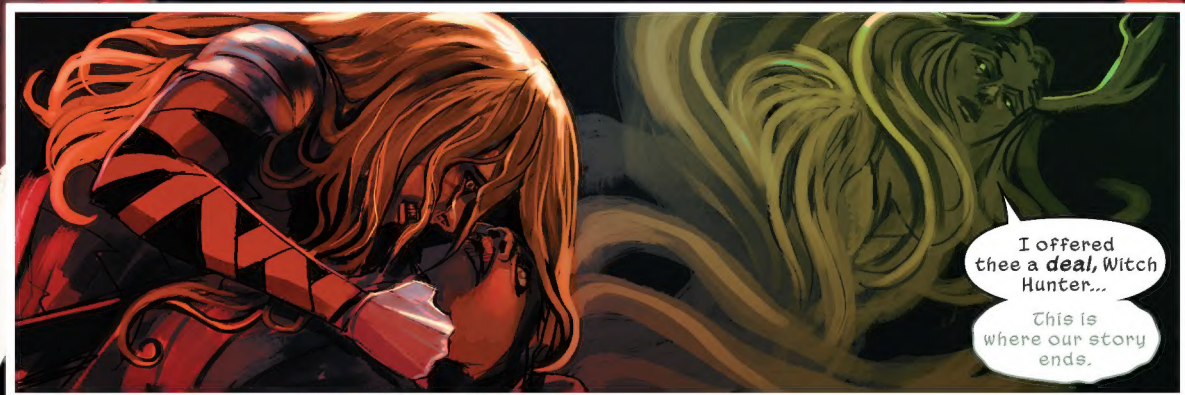
Such a clever little minx.

Yes, the *penitent* doth live.

But my *third Faustian* hath died.



I shall
count that
one.



I offered
thee a *deal*, Witch
Hunter...

This is
where our story
ends.



"Tempter or tempted, who sins most?"

Serah told me not to be afraid.



I followed her. She followed me.

She led me to this place. I led her to her death.

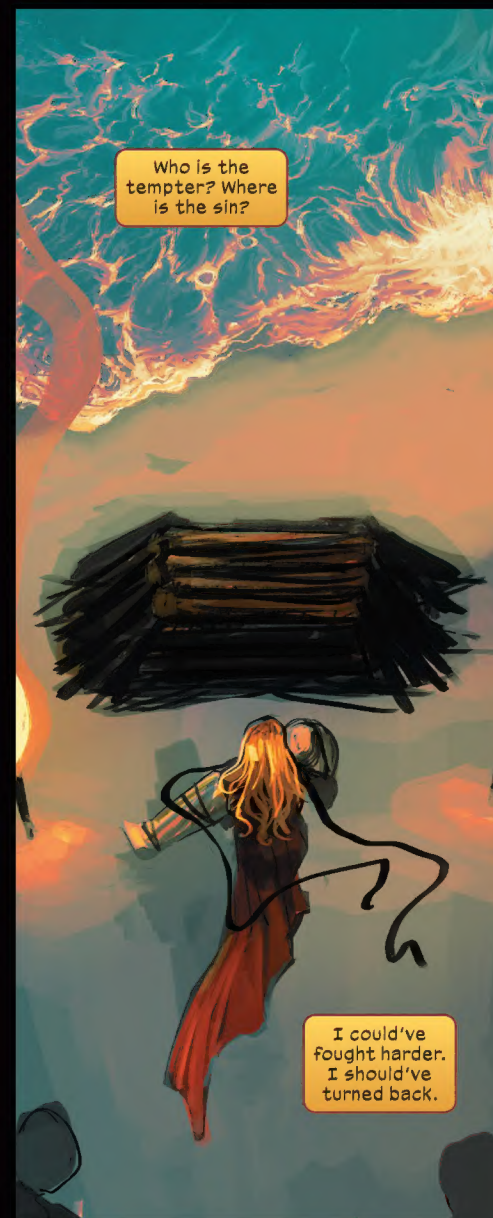


Do not.

We made a deal. You have your life and freedom.



Serah saw to that.



Who is the tempter? Where is the sin?

I could've fought harder. I should've turned back.



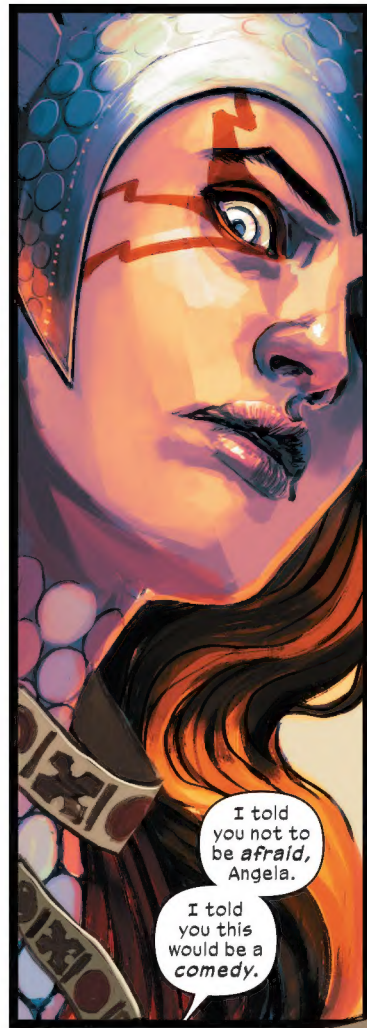
Tempter or tempted...

...what am I without her?



Are you going to Scarborough Faire...?

Parsley, sage, rosemary, and t-thyme...



End of Part Three.